

Message Text

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INFO AMEMBASSY ASUNCION
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AMEMBASSY LA PAZ
AMEMBASSY LIMA
AMEMBASSY MONTEVIDEO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY QUITO
AMEMBASSY SANTIAGO

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUENOS AIRES 0283

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, AR
SUBJECT: FOREIGN MINISTER SUMS UP ARGENTINE FOREIGN RELATIONS IN
1976

1. SUMMARY: FOREIGN MINISTER (ADMIRAL) GUZZETTI, IN PRESS INTERVIEW, REVIEWED ARGENTINE FOREIGN POLICY IN 1976, REPEATING WELL-KNOWN POSITIONS AND ADDING NOTHING NEW. ON BALANCE, GOA APPEARS TO FEEL IT HAS HAD A REASONABLY GOOD YEAR, FOLLOWING A PRAGMATIC AND CAUTIOUS COURSE ORIENTED CLEARLY TO THE WEST BUT LEAVING OPEN RELATIONSHIPS TO COMMUNIST COUNTRIES AND TO THIRD WORLD WHERE IT IS IN ARGENTINE INTEREST TO DO SO. KEYSTONE OF POLICY IS TO BUILD GOOD RELATIONS WITH IMMEDIATE NEIGHBORS, AND ONLY AFTER THAT TO EXTEND ITSELF CAUTIOUSLY INTO OTHER AREAS AND INTO THE GREATER INTERNATIONAL PROBLEMS OF THE WORLD. THE RELATIONSHIP WITH THE US, ON EVE OF NEW ADMINISTRATION IN WASHINGTON, WAS DESCRIBED
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IN HOPEFUL TERMS. END SUMMARY.

2. IN INTERVIEW PUBLISHED IN NEWSPAPER LA OPINION JAN. 8, FON MINISTER ADMIRAL CESAR GUZZETTI REVIEWED ARGENTINA'S FOREIGN RELATIONS IN 1976, AND INDICATED LINES OF POLICY FOR 1977. THEME OF GUZZETTI PRESENTATION WAS NEED TO RESTORE ARGENTINA TO PLACE OF RESPECT AND DIGNITY IN WORLD, TO MAKE IT ONCE AGAIN

THE INFLUENTIAL NATION IT WAS ONLY A FEW DECADES AGO. GUZZETTI PUT IT IN TERMS OF REPAIRING DAMAGE DONE BY IMMEDIATE PREDECESSOR GOVERNMENT (ALTHOUGH THOUGHTFUL ARGENTINES NOW RECOGNIZE THAT THEIR INTERNATIONAL DECLINE BEGAN LONG BEFORE THAT); FIRST PRIORITY OF THE NEW GOVERNMENT HAS BEEN TO REESTABLISH PRIMARY LINKS TO NATIONS OF THE SOUTHERN CONE, LINKS WHICH HAD BECOME RUSTY.

3. BRAZIL: INTERVIEWER LED WITH QUESTION ASSUMING IMPROVED RELATIONS WITH BRAZIL, AND QUERIED GUZZETTI ON CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION WITH THAT COUNTRY. MIN REPLIED THAT GOA HAD PLACED SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON IMPROVEMENT OF RELATIONS WITH BRAZIL BOTH IN MULTILATERAL AND BILATERAL CONSIDERATIONS, UTILIZING EMBASSIES, THE SPECIAL COMMISSION FOR BRAZILIAN-ARGENTINE COOPERATION, HIS OWN VISITS, ETC.

4. PARAGUAY, PERU, BOLIVIA, URUGUAY: IN SHORT RESPONSES, GUZZETTI EMPHASIZED GOOD RELATIONS WITH THESE NEIGHBORS, AND COMMENTED BRIEFLY UPON IMPORTANCE OF HIGH-LEVEL VISITS AND PROGRESS OF MUTUAL PROJECTS IN EACH CASE-- PARAGUAY, HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT AT CORPUS; PERU, VISIT OF FONMIN DE LA PUENTE IN AUGUST 1976, RECENT VISIT OF (GOA) SUBSECRETARY OF COMMERCE TO PERU, AND POSSIBILITY OF OWN VISIT TO LIMA IN 1977; BOLIVIA, MINIG PROJECT AT EL MUTUN AND UPCOMING MEETING OF SPECIAL COMMISSION; URUGUAY, HYDROELECTRIC PROJECT OF SALTO GRANDE. QUESTIONER THEN RELATED NEED FOR FINANCING FOR SUCH BILATERAL PROJECTS TO CURRENT WEAK STATE OF ARGENTINE ECONOMY. GUZZETTI USED OCCASION TO EMPHASIZE NEED FOR PRACTICAL AND CAREFULLY PLANNED PROJECTS, AND EXHORTED ARGENTINES TO USE RICH CONFIDENTIAL

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HUMAN RESOURCES TO DEVELOP ECONOMY, ATTRACT FOREIGN INVESTMENT, AND IMPROVE RELATIONS WITH NEIGHBORS THROUGH SUCH PROJECTS.

5. VENEZUELA: A MEETING BETWEEN PRESIDENTS WAS FORESEEN, AND INCREASED BILATERAL COOPERATION. GUZZETTI SAID THAT BEST COURSE FOR COOPERATION WAS NEW BILATERAL ACCORDS, "WITHOUT PREJUDICING COLLECTIVE NEGOTIATIONS THROUGH LAFTA, SELA, ETC."

6. ECUADOR: CONTRACT BETWEEN ARGENTINE PETROLEUM AGENCY YPF AND THE ECUADORIAN CEPE WAS CITED BY GUZZETTI AS EXAMPLE OF INTER-AMERICAN INTEGRATION.

7. EUROPE, ASIA, AFRICA: GUZZETTI ASSURED QUESTIONER THAT DESPITE SOUTHERN CONE EMPHASIS, GOA WOULD MAKE SPECIAL EFFORT IN 1977 TO ESTABLISH CLOSER LINK TO REST OF WORLD, AND THAT MINISTRY WAS STUDYING PROJECT TO IMPROVE AFRICAN TIES AND INCREASE PHYSICAL PRESENCE THERE.

8. NORTH/SOUTH DIALOG: GUZZETTI NOTED THAT GOA VOTED WITH US

AT NAIROBI ON PROPOSAL FOR RESOURCE FUND, AND THAT WHILE PROJECT FAILED THERE, IT IS OPEN AT UNGA AND FOR MARCH MEETING IN PARIS. HE HAS NOT YET DECIDED WHETHER HE WILL ATTEND PARIS MEETING.

9. DEVELOPMENT: GUZZETTI SAID THAT DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS SUBMITTED FOR ASSISTANCE TO DEVELOPED COUNTRIES MUST NOT BE SUBMITTED IN "INNUMERABLE LISTS" BUT BE CONSIDERED IN STRICT ORDER OF PRIORITY.

10. EXTERNAL IMAGE: GUZZETTI CLAIMED THAT ADVENT OF NEW GOVERNMENT IN MARCH 1976 WAS INITIALLY FAVORABLY RECEIVED IN EUROPE AND IN THE AMERICAS, BUT THAT NEW AUTHORITIES HAD HAD TO SUFFER HARSH AND SYSTEMATIC CAMPAIGN OF DEFAMATION INSTIGATED BY POLITICAL SECTORS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS INTERESTED IN DISTORTING IMAGE OF ARGENTINA ABROAD. GOA AND MINISTRY IN PARTICULAR HAD BEEN SUCCESSFUL IN PUTTING SITUATION IN PROPER PERSPECTIVE, HE SAID.

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1. FALKLAND ISLANDS (MALVINAS) AND BEAGLE CHANNEL: REFERRING TO ARGENTINA'S ONLY INTERNATIONAL DISPUTES, GUZZETTI FIRST NOTED THAT UN VOTES HAD SUPPORTED ARGENTINE POSITION ON MALVINAS AND THAT RENEWED TALKS WITH UK AND NORMALIZATION (RETURN OF AMBASSADORS TO POSTS) OF RELATIONS WITH UK WOULD DEPEND UPON CIRCUMSTANCES (E.E. UK COMMITMENT TO RESUME NEGOTIATIONS). ASKED ABOUT BEAGLE CHANNEL ARBITRATION IN ICJ, GUZZETTI REMAINDED AUDIENCE THAT QUESTION IS MORE THAN JUST THE THREE SMALL ISLANDS AT SOUTHEAST END OF CHANNEL; IT INCLUDES WATERS OF CHANNEL ITSELF, NAVIGATION, RESOURCES, ETC. HE THEN DECLINED TO COMMENT ON POSSIBLE OUT-COME OF ARBITRATION.

12. LAW OF SEA: GUZZETTI EXPRESSED SATISFACTION THAT MOST OF ARGENTINE POSITIONS ON LOS HAD BEEN ENDORSED AND APPEARED TO BE READY FOR INCLUSION IN TREATY. HE NOTED THAT DEEP SEABED EXPLOITATION NEGOTIATION WAS MOVING SLOWLY BECAUSE OF CONFRONTATION BETWEEN GROUP OF 77 AND THE INDUSTRIALIZED COUNTRIES.

13. COMMUNIST COUNTRIES: GUZZETTI NOTED THAT TRADE AGREEMENTS SIGNED BY PRDVIOUS GOVERNMENT WITH SOVIET UNION AND OTHER COMMUNIST COUNTRIES HAVE NOT BEEN RATIFIED. IN 1977, AT REQUEST OF THOSE COUNTRIES, MIXED COMMISSIONS WILL MEET CONCERNING AGREEMENTS TO CONSIDER STATE OF TRADE AND STATUS OF AGREEMENTS. HE RECOGNIZED THAT USSR WAS BIGGEST BUYER FROM ARGENTINA IN 1976, HOWEVER, AND INVOLVED IN SUPPORT TO ARGENTINA IN SEVERAL HYDROELECTRIC PROJECTS.

14. UNITED STATES: FINALLY, QUESTIONER ASKED ABOUT RELATIONS WITH US ON EVE OF CHANGE IN US ADMINISTRATION. GUZZETTI REPLIED THAT RELATIONS "COULD ONLY BE BASED ON TRADITIONAL VALUES SHARED BY BOTH NATIONS." CHANGE OF ADMINISTRATION IN US, HE

SAID, OFFERED OPPORTUNITY TO UPDATE RICH RANGE OF BILATERAL COOPERATION IN "ECONOMIC, CULTURAL, TURISTIC AND SCIENTIFIC-TECHNOLOGICAL MATTERS." IT IS ALSO OPPORTUNITY FOR STRENGTHENING OF OVERALL US-LATIN AMERICAN RELATIONS.

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15. COMMENT: THERE WERE NO SURPRISES IN GUZZETTI'S INTERVIEW, AND WE SEE IN IT AND OTHER GOA COMMENTS ON FOREIGN RELATIONS AT TURN OF YEAR A FEELING OF CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM. THE YEAR COULD EASILY HAVE BEEN MUCH WORSE. THE GOA HOPED FROM THE BEGINNING TO AVOID THE ISOLATION WHICH CHARACTERIZED CHILE'S FOREIGN RELATIONS, WITHOUT HAVING TO PAY TOO HIGH A PRICE IN CONCESSIONS TO FOREIGN OPINION ABOUT THE CONDUCT OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS, PARTICULARLY ITS STRUGGLE WITH SUBVERSION AND HUMAN RIGHTS DIFFICULTIES. IT LARGELY SUCCEEDED IN DOING SO, AND GUZZETTI'S RATHER HUMDRUM RECITAL OF THE FOREIGN RELATIONS POSITION IS AN ACCURATE ENOUGH SUMMARY.
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